

Payton, Bible Translation, Session 2, Resources from Notebooklm

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Payton, Bible Translation, Session 2, Introduction to Bible Translation, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This is a lecture on Bible translation by Dr. George Payton, focusing on the complexities of transferring meaning accurately and effectively between languages and cultures. The lecture explores various definitions of translation, highlighting the ongoing debate between literal and free translation approaches. It examines the challenges of cultural and linguistic equivalence, emphasizing the importance of understanding the source text's context and the target audience's needs. Different types of translation are discussed, including intralingual, interlingual, and inter-semiotic translation (such as adapting biblical stories into movies), along with the qualities of a good translation: accuracy, naturalness, clarity, and acceptability. Finally, the lecture considers practical aspects like target audience, paratextual materials (footnotes, etc.), and the impact of pre-existing translations.

2. 20-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Payton, Introduction to Bible Translation, Part 2 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introductory Series → Bible Translation).

3. Bible Translation: Session 2, Introduction to Bible Translation, Part 2

Bible Translation: Session 2 Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the core concept of translation as defined in the lecture?
2. What is the "literal versus free" dichotomy in translation, and why is it considered unhelpful?
3. Besides the language itself, what other significant factor influences the challenges of Bible translation?
4. According to the lecture, what is the goal when translating a text into another language?
5. Explain the concept of "semantic equivalence" and why it's important in translation.
6. What are the three main types of translation discussed in the lecture? Provide a brief example of each.
7. Explain what the lecture means by "Scripture engagement" and how it relates to Bible translation.
8. What are the four qualities that are desired in a good translation?
9. How can the target audience of a translation affect the way the text is rendered?
10. What is paratextual material, and why is it important in Bible translation?

Answer Key

1. Translation is defined as transferring the meaning of a text from one language to another, focusing on communicating the intended message rather than a strict word-for-word transfer. It involves moving the meaning, purpose, and function from the source language to the target language.

2. The "literal versus free" dichotomy refers to the debate between translating word-for-word versus translating sense-for-sense. It is considered unhelpful because both terms are too vague to be useful, and a truly word-for-word translation is impossible.
3. Besides language, culture is a significant factor that influences translation. The culture, historical background, social environment, worldview, and values of the source text all play a role in how the text should be translated for a different cultural context.
4. The goal is to communicate the meaning and function of the original text to the target audience in a way that is accurate, natural, clear, and acceptable within their sociocultural context, making sure the text reads well in the target language.
5. Semantic equivalence refers to achieving equivalence in meaning between the source text and the target text. It focuses on analyzing the forms and functions of the original language to understand the author's intent and then transfer that to the target text.
6. The three types of translation are: intralingual (within the same language, such as paraphrasing), interlingual (between two different languages, such as translating a novel), and inter-semiotic (between different sign systems, such as turning a book into a movie).
7. "Scripture engagement" refers to material that is not the Bible itself, but uses the content of the Bible in ways designed to engage people more with the Scriptures such as movies, songs, and Bible studies, fostering a deeper spiritual and emotional connection.
8. The four qualities of a good translation are: accuracy (maintaining the original meaning), naturalness (sounding like normal language), clarity (being understandable), and acceptability (being accepted by the target audience).
9. The target audience affects the way a text is translated by dictating the language style, tone, and level of complexity used. The translator has to consider the age, background, and understanding of the audience when translating to make sure it is well-received.
10. Paratextual material refers to additions to the main text, such as footnotes, cross-references, introductions, and glossaries. It is important because it often gives the reader a deeper understanding of the Scriptures and the context, and may increase the impact of the text, especially for pastors and teachers.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Answer each of the following essay questions in a well-organized essay format.

1. Discuss the complex interplay between literal and free translation, drawing on examples from the lecture, and offer your perspective on the best approach for Bible translation.
2. Explain the concept of "culture" and its profound impact on the challenges and opportunities in Bible translation. Discuss specific cultural considerations that translators must be aware of.
3. How does the concept of "acceptability" function as a key quality of a good translation? Discuss instances where acceptability might clash with the ideal translation, and how translators should handle this issue.
4. The lecture introduces the types of translation (intralingual, interlingual, and inter-semiotic). How might the different processes and goals of each type inform the approach to a Bible translation project?
5. Using specific points from the lecture, discuss how the needs and expectations of a target audience (e.g. a church community with a long history or a new church) can shape the methodology and final form of a Bible translation.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Source Text (ST):** The original text in the original language that is to be translated.
- **Target Text:** The translated text in the target language.
- **Source Language:** The language of the original text.
- **Target Language:** The language into which the text is translated.
- **Literal Translation:** A translation approach that aims to stay as close as possible to the word-for-word form of the source text.
- **Free Translation:** A translation approach that aims to focus more on the meaning and function of the text, sometimes varying from the literal form of the source language.
- **Septuagint:** The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.

- **Semantic Equivalence:** The concept of achieving equivalence in meaning between the source text and the target text; transferring the intended meaning, not just the words.
- **Intralingual Translation:** Translation within the same language, such as paraphrasing or simplifying text.
- **Interlingual Translation:** Translation between two different languages.
- **Inter-semiotic Translation:** Translation between different sign systems, such as from written text to visual media.
- **Scripture Engagement:** Materials and methods designed to encourage people to interact with and understand the content of the Bible, such as storybooks, videos, and songs.
- **Accuracy (in translation):** The quality of a translation that faithfully represents the meaning of the original text without adding, taking away, or changing anything.
- **Naturalness (in translation):** The quality of a translation that sounds like normal, native language in the target language.
- **Clarity (in translation):** The quality of a translation that is understandable and easy to follow by the intended audience.
- **Acceptability (in translation):** The quality of a translation that is well-received and used by the target audience, aligning with their expectations and cultural norms.
- **Paratextual Material:** Additional text or materials that accompany the main body of the text, such as footnotes, cross-references, introductions, and glossaries.
- **Sociocultural Context:** The social and cultural environment in which a text is created or used, including values, beliefs, and traditions.

4. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Payton BT_EN_Session02.pdf":

Briefing Document: Bible Translation - Session 2, Introduction to Bible Translation, Part 2

Source: Excerpts from "Payton BT_EN_Session02.pdf" - Dr. George Payton's teaching on Bible Translation.

Date: 2024 (Based on copyright)

Overview:

This session, the second part of an introduction to Bible Translation, focuses on defining translation, exploring its complexities, and outlining the key principles and considerations involved in producing a quality translation, particularly within a biblical context. It emphasizes that translation is much more than a simple word-for-word transfer, but rather a nuanced process of communicating meaning across languages and cultures. The session also highlights the role of Scripture engagement materials and practical aspects of the translation process.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Defining Translation:

- Translation is "transferring the meaning of a text from one language to another." It's not merely about word-for-word substitution.
- It's difficult to create a singular, universally accepted "dictionary definition" of translation. Instead, understanding the process is more beneficial.
- The process involves a source text (ST) in a source language being transferred to a target text in a target language.
- Key elements in translation include:
 - **Meaning:** Communicating the intended meaning of the original text.
 - **Equivalence:** Achieving a level of "equalness" between the source and target texts.
 - **Purpose:** Recognizing that the original text was produced for a specific reason.

- The speaker emphasizes that translation involves both looking backward (at the original text) and forward (to the target text) to ensure accuracy and proper conveyance of the original intent

1. **The Literal vs. Free Dichotomy:**

- This is a long-standing debate (dating back to at least Jerome) regarding whether translations should be "word for word" (literal) or "sense for sense" (free).
- While the literal vs. free debate is ubiquitous and a good starting point for discussion, these terms are too vague to be genuinely helpful.
- Literal translations focus on the form of the original language, whereas free translations focus more on meaning and natural language in the target language.
- It is never truly possible to achieve a strictly word-for-word translation.

1. **The Cultural Dimension of Translation:**

- Translation goes beyond language; it involves bridging cultural gaps. The original text is embedded in the source culture and historical context, including:
 - Worldview
 - Values
 - Social environment
- The challenge is to depict the world of the source language and text into the target language in a way that resonates with the target audience.
- "It's not just a matter of getting this word over here for that word over there or this sentence here for this sentence over here. It's really how we depict the world of the source language and the source text in the target language communicated in the target text."

1. **The Translator's Role:**

- Translators must constantly analyze both the source text and their translation, moving back and forth to ensure accuracy.
- The culture's view of translated material is a factor; translated texts can be seen as secondary or inferior in some cultures.
- The translation process is not just about accurately conveying the original meaning, but also about understanding the author's original intent and motives.

- Translation aims to "empower the translator to make her own grounded choices" based on their analysis.

1. **Defining Translation (Formal Definition):**

- Translation involves:
 1. Transferring a written text from a source language to a target language, considering the sociocultural context of the *source* text.
 2. The written product or target text, which functions within the sociocultural context of the *target* language.
 3. The cognitive, linguistic, visual, cultural, and ideological phenomena integral to both the source and target texts.
- This comprehensive definition emphasizes the complexity and multi-layered nature of translation.

1. **Types of Translation:**

- **Intralingual:** Translation within the *same* language (e.g., paraphrasing, simplifying technical language). Example given is explaining the meaning of "omnipotent" to a child.
- **Interlingual:** Translation between *two different* languages. This is the primary focus of the session.
- **Inter-semiotic:** Translation between different sign systems (e.g., written text to a movie, oral language to written language).

1. **Scripture Engagement Material:**

- Inter-semiotic translations are used as Scripture engagement tools – resources designed to help people interact with the Bible in ways other than simply reading a text.
- Examples of scripture engagement include:
 - Bible storybooks
 - Veggie Tales and other video resources
 - Children's songs
 - Flannel graph stories

- Movies based on Bible stories
- The Chosen TV series.
- The goal is to make a cognitive, spiritual, and emotional connection to the scriptures and God.
- This type of material draws people in and makes them want to engage with God's word.

1. **Qualities of a Good Translation (Print Translation):**

- **Accuracy:** The translated meaning must reflect the meaning of the original biblical text. Nothing should be added, changed, or taken away from the meaning.
- **Natural:** The language should sound normal and not forced or strange. "Yoda speak" is unacceptable.
- **Understandable:** The meaning of the text should be clear to the intended audience.
- **Acceptable:** The translation should be acceptable to the target audience so they will read it and use it.
- These qualities are used as both a goal in the translation process and as measurement tools to evaluate the final product.

1. **Practical Considerations in Bible Translation:**

- **Style:** Determining the desired style of translation can be difficult as people may prefer what they're used to rather than what is most understandable. Translators sometimes need to provide different versions to determine what the community needs and prefers.
- **Existing Bibles:** The presence of an existing major language Bible (e.g., Swahili in Tanzania) can impact how a new translation is received. People will compare it to the established text.
- **Major Religions:** The presence of other major religions and their own religious texts can set expectations for the level of language and specific religious terms in a new Bible translation.
- **Target Audience:** Determining the target audience is crucial. Typically, translations are aimed at adults (ages 25-45) within the Christian community, however there

is no universal target audience. Translators must consider the needs of their specific target group.

- **Paratextual Material:** Footnotes, cross-references, introductions, and glossaries can enhance understanding for pastors and readers.

1. Verbal Interpretation Exercise

- An exercise is provided to illustrate the challenges of translating a medical professional's language into language that an eight-year-old child can understand.
- The exercise demonstrates the need to use familiar language, choose different words to communicate key concepts, and adjust the form and tone to match the intended audience and context
- It shows how "follow a low fat diet" must be translated into terms that a child can understand (eating food that does not have a lot of fat). It also demonstrates how more abstract ideas must be concretized for children.

1. Review of Definition of Translation

- Translation is about transferring the meaning and function of a source text, within its sociocultural context, into a target text with equivalent meaning and function, within *its* (the target) sociocultural context.
- The three types of translation are summarized as interlingual (between 2 languages), intralingual (within 1 language), and inter-semiotic (scripture engagement tools).

Key Quotes:

- "What is translation? It's transferring the meaning of a text from one language to another."
- "It's not just a matter of getting this word over here for that word over there or this sentence here for this sentence over there. It's really how we depict the world of the source language and the source text in the target language communicated in the target text."
- "In translation, we are focusing on the original and the translated text in that we analyze it and systematically link the forms and functions detected in the analysis of the original letters in order to reveal the author's original intended motives and choices."

- "Accuracy, natural sounding, understandable and acceptable" are the four qualities of a good translation.
- "We keep the message the way the message is in the scriptures, and we retain the integrity of the scriptures while at the same time communicating the truth of the gospel."
- "Translation is transferring the meaning, transferring the meaning and function of a source text in its sociocultural context into a target text that has equivalent, as much as possible, equivalent meaning and function."

Conclusion:

This session provides a foundational understanding of Bible translation. It moves beyond a simplistic view of translation as word-for-word substitution, highlighting its complexity and the critical importance of context, culture, and audience. It emphasizes the translator's role as not just a linguistic expert, but also a cultural bridge-builder. The focus on scripture engagement reinforces the goal of making God's word accessible and meaningful to people in various contexts. Finally, the session stresses that producing a good translation is an iterative process and that no one size fits all translation is suitable for every context.

5. FAQs on Payton, Bible Translation, Session 2, Introduction to Bible Translation, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Bible Translation

1. **What is the core goal of translation, and how does it differ from literal interpretation?** Translation, at its essence, is the process of transferring the meaning and function of a text from a source language to a target language, while keeping as much equivalence as possible. It's about conveying the author's intended message, including cultural context and purpose, into a new language. This is distinct from literal interpretation, which is more focused on word-for-word correspondence and can often fail to capture the deeper sense of the text, while translation prioritizes transferring meaning even if it requires different wording.
2. **Why is the "literal versus free" translation debate not particularly helpful?** The terms "literal" and "free" in translation are often too vague. A strictly literal, word-for-word approach is rarely feasible due to the inherent differences between languages, which is why it isn't helpful. On the other hand, a translation that is too "free" may sacrifice crucial nuances of the original text. This dichotomy is still useful to start the conversation. The real question becomes how to best convey the meaning of the original text into a language that sounds natural, clear, and acceptable in the target culture, not if it is literal or free.
3. **How do cultural differences affect the translation process?** Cultural differences are significant hurdles in translation, and that is one of the reasons why literal translation is usually insufficient. The source text is always tied to the culture, history, and worldview of its original audience. Translators must bridge gaps between these different cultures, considering not just the words but also the social and historical context to ensure the meaning resonates with the target audience. This goes beyond simple linguistic changes; it requires understanding and transferring the entire world portrayed in the source text.
4. **Why is the translator's analysis of the source text so important?** A thorough analysis of the source text is critical for translators. It involves dissecting the forms and functions of words and phrases to uncover the author's original intent, motives, and choices. This detailed analysis enables translators to make informed decisions about how to convey that intent in the target language, thereby creating a translation that is not just semantically accurate but also captures the

essence of the original text. It allows translators to then have a solid foundation for the translation that they are undertaking.

5. **What are the different types of translation mentioned, and how do they differ from each other?** There are three primary types of translation: (1) *Intralingual*, which is within the same language, like paraphrasing or simplifying language; (2) *Interlingual*, which involves transferring meaning between two different languages, which is what most people think of as translation; and (3) *Inter-semiotic*, which is translating from one sign system to another, such as adapting a book into a movie or a play, or any scripture engagement tool that is not the written Bible. Each type serves a different purpose in conveying meaning in different contexts and through various media.
6. **Beyond just the written Bible, what is meant by "Scripture engagement," and why is it significant in translation work?** "Scripture engagement" refers to the use of various non-written media to engage people with the content of the Bible. This includes things like Bible storybooks, movies (like "The Chosen" or the "Jesus film"), dramas, songs, and other creative forms that aim to connect people with the Bible emotionally, spiritually, and cognitively. Such engagement is crucial because it can often make the Bible more accessible and impactful, and it complements the written text by drawing people into a deeper experience with the Scriptures.
7. **What four qualities define a good *print* translation?** A good print translation is characterized by four key qualities: (1) *Accuracy*, which means conveying the meaning of the text without adding, removing, or changing anything; (2) *Naturalness*, which ensures that the translation sounds like normal, everyday language in the target language, avoiding awkward or unnatural phrasing (no "Yoda speak"); (3) *Clarity*, which prioritizes how easily the translation is understood; and (4) *Acceptability*, which means that the translation is liked and embraced by the target audience and is in line with their expectations. These qualities work together to produce a translation that is not just faithful to the original but also effective in its intended purpose.

8. What are some key considerations translators must be mindful of during the translation process, and how do these considerations affect the outcome?

Translators must consider many factors that go beyond simply putting words in another language. These considerations include the style and format the target audience prefers (literal, communicative, or other), the existence of a major religious text or translation in the target language, the cultural context, and the specific needs of the target audience (such as the age, understanding, and spiritual maturity). The influence of any major religion in the area is a key consideration as well, because the language level in religious texts is sometimes important for the target audience. The translator must also consider the purpose of the translation: is it to reach new believers, nurture existing believers, or provide resources for pastors? These factors are all crucial because they shape the way the translated text is read, received, and utilized in the community.